

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION
MINUTES OF MAY 25, 2017
SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LONG ISLAND ANTIQUITIES
COLD SPRING HARBOR, NEW YORK**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Gilbert Cardillo	Trustee, Town of Riverhead
Dawn Hopkins	Chair, Trustee, Town of Brookhaven
Debra Kolyer	Member of the Board
Peter Leis	Trustee, Town of Islip
Alexander McKay	Trustee, Town of Huntington
Terence McSweeney	Trustee, Town of Babylon
Michael Rosato	Trustee, Town of Smithtown
William B. Sickles	Trustee, Town of Southampton
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

ABSENT

Kathleen Gooding	Vice Chair, Trustee, Town of Shelter Island
Arthur Leudesdorf	Trustee, Town of Southold
Terrence Pearsall	Member of the Board
VACANT	Member at Large

PARKS DEPARTMENT

Philip Berdolt	Parks Commissioner
Nick Gibbons	Principal Environmental Analyst
Emily Lauri	Community Relations Director
Terry Maccarrone	Coordinator of Community Based Programs
Richard Martin	Director of Historic Services
Tony Trotta	Parks Superintendent
Barbara Rittman	Senior Clerk Typist

GUESTS

Sarah Kautz	Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA)
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PUBLIC PORTION

There were no members of the public present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 27, 2017

Page 2, paragraph 6, last sentence. Commissioner Berdolt commented that plans must be submitted to obtain the necessary DEC permits for projects surrounding wetlands to make certain that repairs and/or rebuilding **are** done properly.

Page 5, last paragraph, 3rd sentence. The applicant is a retired managing director of Blackstone **Group LP** and his family lives in Amagansett.

Page 6, paragraph 5, 3rd sentence. There will **be** no bidding necessary since Parks can use its requirements contract with Branch Services which is already in place.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Trustee Richard White and seconded by Trustee McKay. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 9-0-0.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Director of the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA), Sarah Kautz spoke about the SPLIA organization and headquarters located in Cold Spring Harbor. SPLIA has three additional properties, the Joseph Lloyd Manor House in Lloyd Neck, the Sherwood-Jayne Farm in East Setauket and the Custom House in Sag Harbor. The organization has an extensive collection of Long Island decorative art, fine art and furniture displayed at its various locations. Lauren Brincat, SPLIA's new curator will be working on providing online digital collection portals so that the beautiful collections can also be accessed online. Sarah's focus is to coordinate with various municipalities in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, and the state archeological, and architectural groups involved with preservation and landmarks on Long Island. SPLIA also covers Brooklyn and Queens as well. Sarah noted that she is responsible for the Preservation Notes Newsletter, and that her background is in anthropology and archeology. She has always worked on historic properties in her research on preservation and also works with communities on those types of initiatives.

Richard Martin explained that SPLIA works with private groups on Long Island that need advice and direction. The Historic Services Division of the Parks Department only works on county-owned properties. However, as a recent example of SPLIA and the Historic Services Division working together, the Town of Islip applied to the state many years ago for Brookwood Hall to be named on the National Register and the application was turned down. Richard looked up the Brookwood Hall application files and asked SPLIA members to review it as well. They both agreed that it qualified. Together, they brought the state in to review the application again and it has now been determined that Brookwood Hall is eligible to be named on both the state and national historical registers.

Another example that Richard pointed out was the George Fowler house in Montauk. It explains on the front cover page of the SPLIA Preservation Notes newsletter that it came to the county for back taxes. When the Montaukett Indians were moved off of Montauk County Park by the developer Benson in the late 1890's, it is a possibility that the Fowler house itself was also moved from the property. Additional research needs to be done to verify this. There are 8-10 houses in total that the developer built and he was able to move the Montaukett Indians off of his property into an area that became known as Free Town, a racially segregated area where free people of color moved to after the Civil War.

Sarah reported that every other year SPLIA does an endangered places list which may eventually be referred to as Five to Foster. The Gardiner Foundation is a great resource and various other not-for-profits need to get involved also to form stewardships to raise awareness on issues, demonstrate why these endangered places need and deserve attention, and attract investment so these properties can be celebrated. There is a lot of special funding available for Native American related resources from state and federal programs, which is a possibility for the future.

Sarah stated that the SPLIA organization was founded as a non-profit preservation group in 1948. There has been good financial management so there is a great endowment, many donations come from the community, memberships are available and various fundraisers are held throughout the year. There are winter and summer benefits every year which are normally held at an historic location. In June, the Country House benefit will be held at the Hempstead House in Sands Point.

Richard Martin noted that SPLIA has been a great support to the county program for many years. Barbara Van Liew was an early board member of SPLIA and she created the Preservation Notes Newsletter. She is also responsible for working to start up the Suffolk County Historic Trust in the mid-1970s and she also belonged to the CEQ (Council for Environmental Quality) for decades. The parlor at Deepwells Farm County Park was dedicated in Barbara's honor since she was a resident of St. James. The relationship of working together on different projects goes back many years.

Trustee Rosato inquired who owns the building where the meeting was held and Sarah stated that it is owned by SPLIA, which is privately funded with a combination of art endowments, contributions from members and donors, grants from the government and a variety of foundations targeted toward different programs. Sarah explained that there are a lot of resources so if someone is having difficulty in getting funding for a property, they can reach out to SPLIA because Sarah can help out a lot with landscapes and buildings, and Lauren (the new curator) can help a lot with collections, storage spaces and similar types of issues.

Sarah stated that SPLIA's other three properties are run as historic houses. The Custom House is currently open every weekend until the end of the season. The Sherwood-Jayne and Joseph Lloyd Manor House will be opening soon. Many school groups visit the sites for tours and nature walks.

Trustee McKay inquired about the status of the Marion Carll Farm. He reported that the courts decided that the heirs' lawsuit had no standing and the school district apparently now has sole control. Sarah stated that the property was listed as an endangered place in 2011 and then it went off the radar because there was no local group for SPLIA to work with in order to get involved. She added that there are a lot of possibilities for the property and she would be happy to meet with the school district to discuss it. It is an interesting site and there is definitely potential for a public/private partnership.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that a project worksheet for reimbursement was submitted from Superstorm Sandy for devastation of the ocean beaches and FIMI (Fire Island to Moriches Inlet). It was approved for alternative funding to acquire equipment as long as it meets emergency management criteria. Emergency equipment such as pick-up trucks, excavators, gators (utility vehicles), Park Ranger vehicles, front loaders, small dump trucks and trailers are among the many vehicles that are sorely needed by the Parks Department.

Commissioner Berdolt reported that staff has been preparing for the upcoming Memorial Day weekend and summer season.

Commissioner Berdolt updated on the recent RFP for the North Fork Preserve which was planned to be used for equestrian and/or agricultural use of the 50 acres. The Parks Department had hoped for a response so that the 50 acres could be used for a riding stable and campgrounds. The only response received was from an individual interested in using the 50 acres for grass fed cattle. Since there was only one responder, the Parks Department has the ability to negotiate on the proposal. For the first two years, a lot of clearing, tilling and planting of grass for the cattle would have to be done. Electric and water would also have to be brought in. The bidder would also maintain and fertilize the land, and there would be a 10-year lease with two 5-year options. A removable, small electric perimeter fence with movable paddocks would be installed around where the cattle would be as well. The entire property will also be fenced with some other type of fencing. The Parks Department is currently considering this proposal.

Trustee Cardillo added that the bidder already runs this type of business in Manorville, Shelter Island at Sylvester Manor, and also in upstate New York. Commissioner Berdolt stated that the county owns a slaughter house and another one hundred acre parcel in Yaphank that the business owner is also considering a bid on.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Hopkins commented that she is in favor of the idea that the Parks Department is soliciting Parks gift cards on its website. Commissioner Berdolt stated that the option has always been posted on the website, but it was not prominently displayed. Chair Hopkins suggested an account PayPal option as well and Commissioner Berdolt stated that it is being considered for next year.

Chair Hopkins stated that she reported to the Lake Ronkonkoma Advisory Board and the Inter-municipal Organization that Lake Ronkonkoma is back in competition with other lakes for an Oneonta graduate student to do research studies there.

Chair Hopkins inquired about the status of the Parks Protection Program. Commissioner Berdolt reported that the Parks Department has created a slogan and a dedicated phone number will be posted on signs in the parks to assist in deterring dumping in county parks. Phone lines at the Park Ranger office will be manned from 8 am – midnight and the slogan that was chosen is “RID - Report Illegal Dumping”. In order to comply with the resolution, signs have to be posted at every park. Trust Cardillo reported that he saw signs posted at West Hills CP stating that the area is under surveillance by cameras which is an excellent deterrent.

Chair Hopkins inquired about the progress of the Homan House restoration. Richard Martin reported that it is proceeding well and the contractor is currently there working on a regular basis. The framing has to be replaced room by room. This is a very detailed process because as much of the original plaster walls as possible needs to be preserved. Richard reported that a Parks Trustee meeting will be held at the Homan House once the restoration has been completed.

ROUND TABLE

Trustee Cardillo reported that Indian Island CP is in good shape, as well as Sears Bellows CP.

Nick Gibbons reported that piping plover season is well under way. There are 12 pairs currently active at Smith Point CP. Some plover chicks are currently incubating and some hatching. Similar to last year, the western most pairs are very far west on the outer beach at the ½ mile mark. There are 6 pairs at Cupsogue CP and no out of the ordinary closures there. Two pair nested at Cedar Point and there will be constraints on construction of the lighthouse due to the state not allowing active work until after September 1, unless the plovers finish sooner.

Trustee Sickles commented that he read an article that stated that Hurricane Matthew in the Bahamas may have affected the number of birds coming back to Long Island. Nick stated that he believes it's too soon to tell if this is the case. Trustee Sickles inquired if there are any plovers at McAllister CP or Old Field CP. Nick reported that there are 2 pair at McAllister and 2 pair at Old Field.

Trustee Rosato inquired about the number of pairs that return each year. Nick stated that the number this year at Smith Point CP is relatively average to the normal amount. This is the twentieth season and the highest number of pairs to nest there has been 18 pairs. There is a statewide census each year that runs from June 1st to June 10th to determine when the pairs that have been arriving will stabilize. From that point on, those pairs recycle for the rest of the season. The plovers can re-nest up to four times per season if they have been unsuccessful due to predation or a variety of other natural causes. Nick reported that there is presently a camera trapping survey going on to identify the population of fox that is currently at Smith Point CP. But they haven't found any thus far.

Black silk fencing which is used for erosion control at construction projects is being used to sandwich between two layers of snow fencing to protect the piping plovers from wandering across Burma Road. The three layer barriers are being installed on either side of Burma Road and Nick is cautiously optimistic that this will be successful. Commissioner Berdolt commented that either side of Burma Road will be lined with Christmas trees this winter as well. US Fish & Wildlife had wanted to de-vegetate and knock the dune line down right up to Burma Road which would mean that there would be no buffer. Instead, Parks plans to create approximately twenty feet on either side with Christmas trees and bushes, and allow the sand to build up which will hopefully make it less appealing for a plover chick to wander into. LIBBA has agreed to assist the Parks Department with this effort.

Trustee Leis inquired if there were any updates on the Lt. Michael Murphy Navy SEAL project. Commissioner Berdolt reported that a meeting was held and there are some questions outstanding regarding grant funding for the county to build the access road, and also the road to be called the Hall of Heros. How much the actual grant would amount to is also in question. Initially, the agreement was that the county would donate the land and everything else was going to be paid for. There are also questions regarding naming the building a Navy SEAL museum because the Navy SEAL museum down south is not in total agreement that it would actually be a Navy SEAL museum. It may turn out to be more like a Lt. Michael Murphy memorial museum. Fundraising is still planned to get the project completed.

Richard Martin reported on the recent county purchase of the Wawapek Preserve located behind the SPLIA building in Cold Spring Harbor. A map of the property was distributed showing the Huntington Shore Road Historic District. Nick Gibbons stated that the county paid 50% for the purchase of Wawapek property, the Town of Huntington paid a percentage and the North Shore Land Alliance paid a percentage, leaving the county with a controlling interest in the property. Architect Grosvenor Atterbury built the estate and the property itself is a town historic district. The Wawapek Preserve is also on the national register, making it an historic landscape.

Throughout the grounds, there are carriage drives and beautiful forested woodland/trails areas. Richard plans to do more research on the estate with Sarah Kautz. The North Shore Alliance gathered all of the partners to make the Wawapek purchase and it also purchased the next two tax map parcels on the north end which includes a formal garden area and some buildings, including the caretaker's house and a greenhouse. The Land Alliance created an entrance, parking lot and some additional new plantings on the property as well. Richard plans to go ahead with the historic trust committee to have the property dedicated as an historic landscape after acquiring some additional information.

The next Parks Trustee meeting will be held at the Isaac Mills House in St. James on Thursday, June 22, 2017.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Richard White and was seconded by Trustee Alexander McKay. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 9-0-0.